ANNUAL REPORT 1989-90

COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

CONSEIL DES UNIVERSITÉS DE L'ONTARIO

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IN 1989-90

THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

Council of Ontario Universities
Conseil des Universités de l'Ontario
444 Yonge Street
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Terms of Reference of
The Committee on the Status of Women in Ontario Universities

1. *To generate, collate and analyze information on the status of women (including faculty, support staff and students) in Ontario universities of a nature useful for policy purposes.*

2. *To serve as a focal point for discussion among the universities on the status of women in the institutions.*

3. *To advise Council on policies and strategies for ensuring equity for women in Ontario universities which might serve as a basis either for concerted action or as models for consideration by member institutions, including*

   a) *the recruitment and advancement of qualified women for faculty, administrative and other support staff positions;*

   b) *equity in employment conditions for women;*

   c) *accessibility and study conditions for women students; and*

   d) *other aspects of the status of women on campus that the Committee deems appropriate for collective review.*

Introduction

As the fifth anniversary of the Committee on the Status of Women in Ontario Universities approaches, this report on activities during the 1989-90 academic year has been prepared to acquaint Council and the wider university community with the many constructive projects arising from the Committee's terms of reference. Lists of membership and activities since the Committee's establishment in 1985 are appended.

Because its members include faculty, presidents, deans and other academic administrators, as well as administrative staff with responsibilities in a number of areas (employment equity, human resources, continuing studies, student counselling), the Committee has links with a variety of university personnel and offices. As a standing committee of the Council of Ontario Universities, it can provide an effective liaison with the executive heads of the universities and with Council's other committees and affiliates. Some of these links are formalized: the Committee's membership includes an executive head and an academic colleague of Council; and a member of the Committee on the Status of Women is also appointed to the Committee on Enrolment Statistics and Projections.

Other opportunities for liaison arise because of members' participation in bodies such as the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies, the Ontario Universities Association of Personnel Administrators and the Ontario University Employment and Educational Equity Network. Members have represented the Committee at a number of conferences, including Canadian and international conferences on sexual harassment in universities; a symposium sponsored by the Coalition for Equity in Mathematics, Science and Technology; and annual conferences of the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services and the Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada.

The quality of the Committee's work and leadership over the past five years have earned it recognition as a productive and expert body which has dealt effectively with a wide range of women's issues. Government and university organizations increasingly seek the Committee's advice and expertise, as demonstrated by the projects described in this report.

Proposal to the Premier's Council

Following a recommendation from Council, the Committee worked in 1988-89 to develop further some of the ideas contained in its very successful 1988 report, *Attracting and Retaining Women Students for Science and Engineering*. The result was a proposal to the Premier's Council for the establishment of a Centre for the Advancement of Women in Science and Technology. In April 1989 the proposal was discussed with Lyn McLeod, then Minister of Colleges and Universities and with the Premier's Council consultants. In the Fall of 1990, letters were sent to individual members of the Council, and to the new Minister of Colleges and Universities, informing them of the proposal and requesting their support. We are now awaiting a new report from the Premier's Council, which according to the Council Secretariat, will deal with the issues raised in our proposal, although not with the specific recommendation for the creation of a centre.

The Committee is continuing to maintain contacts with organizations of women in science and to promote the ideas in *Attracting and Retaining* . . . and the proposal to the Premier's Council. This spring, the Chair of the Committee, Dr. Sandra Pyke, was invited by the Women's Directorate to meet with Dr. Monique Frize, holder of the women-in-engineering chair at the University of New Brunswick and head of a new national study group on women and engineering.

Meeting with the Minister of Citizenship

On August 23, 1989, Dr. Pyke joined members of the COU Secretariat at a meeting with the Minister of Citizenship and his staff, part of the consultative process leading to development of new employment equity initiatives in the province. The COU representatives highlighted some of the projects of the Committee on the Status of Women, such as the preparation of *Employment Equity for Women: A University Handbook* (1988), and suggested some general considerations that should apply in

the development of broader employment equity programmes. Educational as well as employment equity was stressed, with reference to *Attracting and Retaining Women Students for Science and Engineering.*

Recruitment and Hiring Training Package

At the request of the Ontario Women's Directorate, the Committee helped to customize a package of training materials on bias-free recruitment and hiring of non-academic staff for use in universities and colleges. The training package was introduced at a conference of the Ontario Universities Employment and Educational Equity Network in December 1989.

Joint Project with the Ontario Commission on Interuniversity Athletics

Last summer the Committee responded positively to an invitation from the Ontario Commission on Interuniversity Athletics to participate in a joint study of equality of employment in athletics and recreation departments. Members of the Committee have provided some input into plans for a workshop which the Commission will host early in June.

Report on Women's Studies Programmes

As an organization dedicated to improving the status of women in the university, the COU Committee felt it was essential that a project be undertaken to inform Council about a significant development in university curricula and scholarship in recent decades: the growth of women's studies. A report on women's studies programmes in the Ontario universities was completed in the Fall of 1989. This report describes both the development of women's studies as a new inter-disciplinary field of scholarship and the formal programmes that have emerged at fourteen Ontario universities. The report contains a number of appendices, including a listing of all courses with women's studies content offered by the Ontario universities in 1988-89, and a representative list of PhD dissertations on women and feminist topics.

As was the case with the two earlier publications, the report was very well received. More than 700 copies have been distributed to the Canadian university community, government agencies and women's organizations.

Survey of Women's Studies Graduates

As the second stage of its work on women's studies, the Committee will be conducting a follow-up survey on the educational and career outcomes of students who have chosen to major in this new area of scholarship. It is estimated that approximately 300 students have graduated to date from programmes in the Ontario universities. Social Data Research Ltd of Hamilton has been engaged as a consultant for the project.

Checklists

In the Summer of 1988, individual institutions were asked to report on what they had done to implement recommendations and suggestions set out in the Committee's first report, *Women in the Universities of Ontario* (1987). The results of this survey were transmitted to Council late in 1988, but there was some concern with inconsistencies in reporting. Throughout 1988-89, the Committee worked to develop more reliable survey instruments which will continue to be refined and used to monitor the status of women in Ontario universities. The first in this series of checklists was sent to members of the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies in September 1989. A summary report will be completed in the summer. Checklists on undergraduate students, non-academic staff and faculty were sent out in February and March 1990. Reports on each survey will be available by September.

Collection of Information on Institutional Employment Equity Initiatives for Faculty

As part of a possible future project on faculty hiring, the Committee has requested information on institutional initiatives for recruiting and hiring women faculty. Most institutions have responded to this request, providing a good source of information on the innovative measures already in place at a number of universities. This information may be used for future projects such as preparation of a faculty recruitment and hiring handbook.

Data on the Pool of Faculty Candidates

An important aspect of faculty hiring was considered by the Committee two years ago: identification of the pool of potential women candidates. At that time, the Committee considered developing a registry of women candidates in the sciences. This project was not pursued because of a lack of resources for the continuous updating that would be needed. More recently, a number of institutions, particularly those participating in the Federal Contractors Program, are finding that existing data, such as the Statistics Canada data on doctoral degrees awarded, are of limited usefulness in developing institutional employment equity programmes. The Committee has been asked whether anything can be done collectively to develop better data. The technical aspects of data collection and analysis have now been taken on by the new COU Task Force on Employment Equity Data. The Committee will continue to be concerned with general issues of faculty recruitment and hiring, and with the development of policies and strategies.

Faculty Renewal Programme

In March, the Committee forwarded to COU recommendations pertaining to a possible extension of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities Faculty Renewal funding. The Committee believes that to be eligible for such funding institutions should have in place employment equity plans for women and for other under-represented groups. Some preliminary analysis of data on new faculty appointments

in each year of the present Faculty Renewal programme was also undertaken; more work will be done when complete data on relevant appointments become available.

Project on Part-time Faculty and Other Non-Regular Instructional Personnel

Since 1988, the Committee has been attempting to gather data and review employment practices pertaining to part-time faculty and other categories of non-regular instructional personnel. This project has been repeatedly delayed because of the poor quality of existing data and difficulty in accessing what data are available. A paper on the issues and some strategies for addressing gender-related problems will be presented to Council in Fall, 1990.

Royal Commission on the Status of Women Anniversary Project

A brief informational document is being prepared to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in September, 1990. The suggested model is "A Statistical Glance", published by the COU Communications Division. Such a document would include data illustrating improvements in the status of women in universities since 1970, as well as a summary of recommendations that are still only partially implemented.

University Programmes for Mature Women Students

Plans for a report on flexibility and adaptability of university programmes for mature students grew out of discussions on the problems that women with family responsibilities encounter in pursuing university education, especially at the graduate or professional level. As now envisaged, the report will document a range of activities and initiatives in Ontario universities, including transitional year programmes, opportunities for part-time and continuing study, distance education, flexible programme requirements, and provision of appropriate student services. Work on this project will continue in 1990-91.

Campus Safety Audit Project

During the Fall of 1989, the Committee was disturbed by a number of incidents at individual campuses that indicated an increasing backlash against feminism and the increased participation of women in universities. The responses of university administrations to these incidents was a particular concern of the Committee. In December 1989, Dr. Pyke conveyed the Committee's sympathies to the president of l'École polytechnique following the murder of fourteen young women. During meetings in early 1990, campus violence and backlash against women were discussed. The Committee expects to continue to address these important issues next year, and has initiated a major project on campus safety.

In the Spring of 1988, some members of the Committee were asked to comment on a draft safety audit kit being developed by the Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC). At that time, a university-

specific version of the safety audit kit was suggested as a future project. That idea was revived in March 1990, when the Committee received a special employment equity grant from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ontario Women's Directorate. METRAC will be engaged as consultants for the project, which will include background research, development of a university and college specific safety audit kit, pilot testing at a number of representative institutions, preparation of materials and a programme for an introductory workshop, to be held in January 1991. MCU has asked that materials developed through the project be applicable to the CAATs and that a French language version be made available.

APPENDIX

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COU COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 1985-86 THROUGH 1989-90

Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, Vice-Rector, Academic, University of Ottawa
Chair, 1985-86 through 1987-88

Naomi Black, Professor of Political Science and
Advisor to the President on the Status of Women, York University
1985-86 through 1986-87

Barbara Ferrier, Professor of Biochemistry, McMaster University
1985-86 through 1986-87

Wendy Gerhard, Professor of Nursing, Laurentian University
1985-86 through 1986-87

Ron Ianni, President, University of Windsor
1985-86 through 1987-88

Daniel Madar, Professor of Politics, Brock University
1987-88 through 1988-89

Mary Morton, Professor of Sociology, Queen's University
1985-86 through 1987-88

Nancy Sherouse, Director of Staff Relations, Trent University
1985-86 through 1987-88

Denis Smith, Dean of Social Science, University of Western Ontario
1985-86 through 1986-87

Lois Reimer, Status of Women Officer, University of Toronto
1985-96 through 1987-88

Sandra Pyke, Dean of Graduate Studies, York University
1987-88, Chair, 1988-89 through 1990-91

Mary Beverley-Burton, Professor of Zoology, University of Guelph
1987-88 through 1989-90

Doreen Brisbin, Professor of Chemistry and
Advisor to the Vice-President (Academic), University of Waterloo
1988-89 through 1989-90

Myrna Holman, Employment Equity Coordinator and
Human Resources Officer, Lakehead University
1988-89 through 1989-90

Marilyn Marshall, Dean of Social Sciences, Carleton University
March 1989 -

John Stubbs, President, Trent University
1988-89 -

William Trimble, Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources, University of Western Ontario
1989-90 -

Rosemarie Volpe, Student Counsellor, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute
1987-88 through 1989-90

Jacquelyn Wolf, Director, School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto
1988-89 -

Janice Yalden, Dean of Arts, Carleton University
July 1988 through January 1989

ACTIVITIES OF THE COU COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN 1985-86 THROUGH 1988-89

Letter to executive heads urging all Ontario universities to apply for Employment Equity Incentive funding available from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (October 1985).

Letter to Chair of Council suggesting that the intention of improving the percentage of women faculty in Ontario universities be included in a COU brief to OCUA on the Faculty Renewal Fund (November 1985).

On behalf of COU, a brief in response to Ontario Government Green Paper on pay equity was written and presented to the Consultation Panel (Spring 1986).

Special Employment Equity Incentive grant for preparation of a university employment equity handbook awarded by MCU (April 1986).

Letter to Chair of Council suggesting use of the Faculty Renewal Funds for increased hiring of women (May 1986).

Collection of material for a documentation centre on the status of women in Ontario universities (begun in 1985-86; continuing).

Graduate student hired for summer project on the employee as parent in the Ontario universities (Summer 1986).

Meeting with representatives of OCUFA, COUSA and CUEW status of women committees (October 1986).

Joint meeting with university employment equity coordinators (November 1986).

Cooperative project with COU Committee on Enrolment Statistics and Records regarding programme choices of female and male students with Grade 13 math and science (1985-86, 1986-87).

Participation with members of the Council of Senior Administrative Officers in preparing and presenting a COU response to the proposed Ontario pay equity legislation (March 1987).

Monitoring of appointments in the first year of Faculty Renewal funding, using new appointments data ordered from Statistics Canada (Spring 1987).

Development of policy recommendations on women graduate students, non-academic taff, faculty and university climate, which were submitted to Council in the report *Women in the Universities of Ontario* (April 1987).

Graduate students hired to prepare background reports on women's low participation in the sciences and on the recent employment experiences of women PhDs (Summer 1987).

Representation at a conference on disseminating feminist research and at a CAUT workshop on women and academic freedom (October 1987).

Research on the possible development of a registry of women PhDs (1987-88).

Survey on part-time faculty data, policies and practices, in cooperation with researchers at York university (begun in 1987-88).

Letter from the Chair to the Minister of State for Science and Technology regarding making new federal science scholarships available to under-represented groups (February 1988). [The guidelines for the scholarships that were issued later in 1988 required that each institution's candidates for the scholarship be at least 50% female.]

Publication of *Employment Equity for Women: A University Handbook* (March 1988).

Publication of *Attracting and Retaining Women Students for Science and Engineering* (June 1988).

Expression of concern to executive heads about their acceptance of honourary memberships in a club which excludes women as full members (Summer 1988).

Survey and report on institutional implementation of *Women in the Universities of Ontario* (Summer and Fall 1988).

Representation at OCUFA workshop on the compensation of female academic staff (September 1988).

Development of checklists for on-going monitoring of progress on status of women issues (1988-89; continuing).

Graduate student hired to undertake background research for report on women's studies programmes (1988-89).

Meetings with representatives of the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Science and Women in Science and Engineering about the possibility of joint projects (Fall 1988). [COU assists these groups by mailing their newsletters to deans and department heads through the IUTS system.]

Advice to the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies regarding the programme and speakers for a May 1989 retreat on the theme of women and graduate studies (1988-89).

Meeting with staff of the Ontario Women's Directorate and MCU regarding a proposal to the Premier's Council on the participation of women in science and technology (February 1989).

Participation in *Planning for Diversity*, an MCU workshop on employment equity (March 1989).

Successful applications to MCU for funding for the OCGS retreat and for recovering costs of a second printing of the employment equity handbook (March 1989).

Meeting with Minister of Colleges and Universities regarding a proposal to the Premier's Council for the establishment of a Centre for the Advancement of Women in Science and Technology (April 1989).

Review of draft METRAC safety audit kit by three members and other staff at their institutions (Spring 1989).

Participation in OCGS retreat on women in graduate studies and a conference of Ontario university status of women and employment equity officers (May 1989).

Committee secretary co-authors paper ("The Increasingly Female Clientele for University Education in Canada") for Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education meeting (June 1989).

A MESSAGE TO COUNCIL

Text of Report by Dr. Sandra Pyke
Chair of the Committee on the Status of Women in Ontario Universities

The following report was verbally presented to the Council of Ontario Universities on the occasion of Council's 199th meeting at Laurentian University, May 23, 1990.

Annual Report from The Committee on the Status of Women

Copies of the Committee's written report, containing a factual account of the Committee's activities, were circulated to Council. The document includes the terms of reference for the Committee, an outline of current projects and an appendix listing the various assignments undertaken by the Committee and its membership since its inception in 1985.

Outline

Instead of commenting directly on the specifics of the report, it might be more productive in this context to discuss the 'woman question' from a somewhat broader perspective. For example, we might ask, "What is the current status of women in the Ontario university system?" How we frame our response will depend in large measure on the variables indicative of status which we choose to examine. These variables might include a number of indices illustrating the improved participation rate of women in the system. Or, we might look at various structural changes (the implementation of affirmative action plans, for example). Or, modifications in the curriculum or in the research and scholarship process might prove appropriate indicators. Clearly, a multiplicity of factors are relevant to our question.

Participation Rate

In 1987-88, in the Ontario system, women comprised 50% of full-time undergraduates; 65% of part-time undergraduates; 40% of full-time graduate students and 49% of part-time graduate students. Of all degrees awarded by Ontario universities in 1987, 54% of the bachelor's and first professional degrees were obtained by women, 46% of the master's degrees went to women and 31% of the doctorates. Seventeen percent of the full-time faculty in Ontario universities were women in 1987-88. And, 35% of all the new full-time faculty appointments in 1987-88 were extended to women.

These percentages are in marked contrast to comparable figures of 20 or even 10 years ago. Two decades ago, for example, only 12% of the full-time faculty were women and ten years ago, only 21% of all new full-time faculty appointments were

given to women. The contrasts are even more dramatic in the case of student completion of degrees. To illustrate, only 6% of all doctoral degrees were awarded to women in 1968-69 as compared with 31% twenty years later. These data suggest that universities have become increasingly accessible to both women students and women faculty.

Structural Changes

Over the past ten to twenty years Ontario universities have responded to the woman question through: 1) the establishment of status of women task forces and commissions, 2) the creation of status of women offices and appointment of officers, 3) the adoption of nonsexist language policies, 4) the implementation of policies on sexual harassment and the appointment of complaint officers, 5) the development of affirmative action, pay equity and employment equity plans and procedures, 6) the appointment of women to senior administrative posts, and, the last example, 7) the establishment of the COU Committee on the Status of Women.

Curricular Changes

Similarly, we note a significant ripple in the curricular offerings of the Ontario university system as courses with content relevant to women erupt in almost every discipline. Undergraduate interdisciplinary programmes in Women's Studies, nonexistent twenty years ago, are now available in virtually every Ontario university and planning for graduate level programmes in this area is well underway in at least one institution.

Conclusion

It is tempting indeed to point with pride to these achievements and say, "Look what we have wrought". But have the universities really played a leadership role in all these events? To what extent are these advances a response to inescapable grass roots pressures or externally imposed dicta. I submit to you that Ontario institutions have not been highly visible champions of equality for women and further that a closer inspection of the status of women in academe reveals the hostile quality of the university environment for many women.

Hostile Environment

As evidence of the latter, consider one of the responses to the date rape campaign at Queen's - "No means more beer" (Kierans, 1990), or the graffiti at Osgoode Hall Law School - "Woman equals Nazi" (Landsberg, 1990) or the charges by students and professors of the University of Western Ontario law school of discrimination and sexual harassment (McCann, 1989); or the panty raids at Wilfrid Laurier University (French, 1989); or the subjection of female swimmers to ogling and leering at the University of Toronto (Makin, 1989), or the vandalism perpetrated against the Women's Studies programme at the University of Waterloo (Dagg and Thompson, 1988), or the case of Marylee Stephenson who lost her fight for tenure at McMaster

University (Dagg and Thompson, 1988), or the fate of the Department of Home Economics at the University of Windsor (Dagg and Thompson, 1988), or the initial rejection of a Women's Studies Programme by the Senate of Lakehead University, or the continuing problems associated with inadequate and/or unaffordable day care as documented by Fran Klodawsky (1989) of Carleton University, or the continued anti-women stance of the school of social work at Laurentian university (Dagg & Thompson, 1988). All of these examples are, of course, minor in comparison with the tragic events of last December at l'École polytechnique.

Even the participation rate data, the most positive and dramatic evidence of change, may be construed as reflecting a half empty rather than half full cup. Women's participation rates in the applied sciences and engineering are still abysmally low. The average salaries for female faculty at every rank are below those of male faculty, a differential also reflected among the full-time non-academic staff (MCU, 1988). Implementation of the recommendations of the COU Committee with respect to Graduate Studies proceed at a snail's pace (Sheinin, 1989), and so on.

Such examples support Adrienne Rich's (1979) contention that, " What we have at present is a man-centered university, a breeding ground not of humanism, but of masculine privilege. As women have gradually and reluctantly been admitted into the mainstream of higher education, they have been made participants in a system that prepares men to take up roles of power in a man-centred society, that asks questions and teaches 'facts' generated by a male intellectual tradition, and that both subtly and openly confirms men as the leaders and shapers of human destiny both within and outside academia." Or, from another perspective, Donaldson and Kymlicka (1989), distressed with the slow and/or minimal response of university administrators to the shocking incidents of last fall on several campuses, suggest that university Presidents have in effect communicated that, "We are not, and have never been, committed to sexual equality. We respond only when pushed by the national media, the human rights commission, organized women's groups, or (most important) by threats to our fund-raising. We respond slowly, and while we do set up rules against sexist behaviour, we do not punish transgressors, and we make the process as difficult as possible for complainants."

Where do we go from here?

These are the views of an important and sizeable segment of the population. But, in fact, universities have responded to challenge, if not always with alacrity, or boldly, or decisively, then at least for the most part, with good will and persistence. Understandably, senior university administrators, confronted with feminist impatience or anger, despair. We see ourselves as committed to equality and social justice. That our best efforts should be scorned, maligned, misunderstood, engenders feelings of frustration. It isn't easy to undo 6,000 years of patriarchal editing.

But clearly, whatever we have done, it is not enough. Universities are the standard bearers for cultural values. If we allow disrespect, if we tolerate injustice, we fail in our societal responsibilities. We have an obligation to contribute the necessary

leadership in the realization of full equality for all regardless of sex or gender. We must not lose any more opportunities to do the right thing.

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